

IN THE CLAIMS:

All claim amendments and cancellations are made without prejudice or disclaimer.  
Please amend the claims as follows:

1-16. (Canceled).

17. (Withdrawn) A method of treating an inflammatory disorder in a subject, said method comprising:

administering to the subject an apoptosis inducing agent that exhibits its effect in aberrant cells involved with or related to immune diseases.

18. (Withdrawn) A method of treating an immune disease in a subject, said method comprising:

administering to the subject an apoptosis inducing agent that exhibits its effect in aberrant cells involved with or related to immune diseases.

19. (Currently amended) A method of treating an inflammatory disorder in a subject, said method comprising:

administering a gene delivery vehicle to the subject, said gene delivery vehicle comprising:

a gene capable of expressing an apoptosis inducing agent that exhibits its effect in aberrant cells involved with or related to immune diseases;

wherein said apoptosis inducing agent is ~~the~~ an apoptosis inducing protein apoptin;

wherein expression of said apoptin inducing agent induces apoptosis in the aberrant cells, thus treating the inflammatory disorder in the subject.

20. (Currently amended) A method of treating an immune disease in a subject, said

method comprising:

administering a gene delivery vehicle to the subject, said gene delivery vehicle comprising:

a gene capable of expressing an apoptosis inducing agent that exhibits its effects in aberrant cells involved with or related to immune diseases;

wherein said apoptosis inducing agent is ~~the~~ an apoptosis inducing protein apoptin;

wherein expression of said apoptin inducing agent induces apoptosis in the aberrant cells, thus treating the immune disease in the subject.

21. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 19, wherein said gene delivery vehicle further comprises a suicide gene.

22. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 21, wherein said suicide gene is inducible.

23. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 19, wherein said gene delivery vehicle has a tropism for hematopoietic cells.

24. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 19, wherein said gene delivery vehicle has a tropism for fibroblast-like synoviocytes.

25. (Currently amended) The method according to claim ~~19~~24, wherein said gene delivery vehicle comprises a targeting means.

26. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 19, wherein said gene delivery vehicle comprises a recombinant adenovirus.

27. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 17, wherein the apoptosis inducing agent comprises apoptin or a functional fragment, derivative or equivalent thereof.

28. (Withdrawn) The method according to claims 17 wherein said apoptosis inducing agent is inducible.

29. (Withdrawn) A method for determining the presence of cells likely to result in an immune disease, said method comprising:

providing suspect cells with apoptin-like activity,  
subjecting said suspect cells to stress, and  
determining whether said cells undergo apoptosis.

30. (Withdrawn) A method for determining the presence the presence of autoimmune diseases in a subject, said method comprising:

obtaining a sample from said individual, said sample comprising cells implicated in said autoimmune disease,

providing said cells with apoptin-like activity, and  
determining apoptosis to determine if he subject has an autoimmune disease.

31. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 25, wherein said gene delivery vehicle comprises a targeting means for fibroblast-like synoviocytes.

32. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 29, wherein said suspect cells are stressed by heat shock, osmotic shock, UV or chemical stress.

33. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 21, wherein said gene delivery vehicle has a tropism for hematopoietic cells.

34. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 21, wherein said gene delivery vehicle has a tropism for fibroblast-like synoviocytes.

35. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 21, wherein said gene delivery vehicle comprises a targeting means.

36. (Currently amended) The method according to claim ~~21~~34, wherein said gene delivery vehicle comprises a recombinant adenovirus.

37. (Previously presented) A process of inducing apoptosis in a fibroblast-like synoviocyte, the process comprising:

infecting the fibroblast-like synoviocyte with a recombinant adenovirus comprising a gene encoding apoptin, thus inducing apoptosis.

38. (New) A method of treating rheumatoid arthritis in a subject, the method comprising:

administering a recombinant adenovirus comprising a gene encoding apoptin to a subject thought to be in need of such treatment; and

targeting the recombinant adenovirus to a fibroblast-like synoviocyte; and

inducing apoptosis in one or more of the fibroblast-like synoviocyte of the subject, thereby treating rheumatoid arthritis.